

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in this Application. Claims 1, 7, and 11 have each been amended. Claim 6 has been canceled. Claims 21 to 26 have been withdrawn as the  
5 result of an earlier restriction requirement. In view of the Examiner's earlier restriction requirement, Applicant retains the right to present Claims 21 to 26 in a future application.

Applicant acknowledges the Examiner's finding that Claims 18 and 19 are  
10 directed to allowable subject matter. Applicant further acknowledges the Examiner's finding that Claims 5 to 8 and 10 to 16 would be considered allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

15 Referring to the Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 9 and 17 stand rejected as anticipated by Gueissaz (U.S. Pat. No. 6,454,160). The Office Action states that Gueissaz "teaches a process for packaging a microscopic structure, said process comprising the steps of: assembling a microscopic structure 6 substantially enclosed within a cavity defined by a shell 16 having at least one throughhole 10 extending therethrough in  
20 communication with the cavity (col. 11, lines 20-67 and Fig. 13); and applying a molten material 18 to fill the at least one throughhole 10 wherein the molten material 18 subsequently solidifies to yield a hermetic pressure seal (col. 12, lines 1-8 and Fig. 15)." Applicant has amended Claim 1 to include the limitations of Claim 6. Accordingly,

Claim 1 (currently amended) is representative of Claim 6 rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, thereby placing Claim 1, as amended, into condition for allowance for the reasons stated by the Examiner in objecting to Claim 6.

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Accordingly, Claim 1 as amended, is patentable over the cited reference, and Claims 2, 9 and 17 are also patentable since each ultimately depends from Claim 1 as amended.

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Referring to the Office Action, Claims 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over by Gueissaz (U.S. Pat. No. 6,454,160) in view of Boroson et al (U.S. Pat. No. 6,470,594). Claims 3 and 4 are each ultimately dependent from Claim 1 (currently amended). Accordingly, Claims 3 and 4 are patentable over the cited references for at least the same reasons as Claim 1 (currently amended).

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Claims 5 through 8, and 10 through 16 are each ultimately dependent from Claim 1 (currently amended). Accordingly, these claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as Claim 1 (currently amended).

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**Applicant respectfully points out that Claim 20 seems to have been inadvertently excluded from review by the Examiner.** The above comments are applicable to Claim 20. The cited references fail to teach the combination of steps of Claim 20. More specifically, the references whether taken individually or in any

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combination, do not anticipate or make obvious the limitations of "depositing a metal layer over the support layer that is thick enough to provide a barrier against gas permeation, but thin enough to leave the vias open; and selectively applying under high vacuum a laser beam to the metal proximate each via for a sufficient period of time to melt the metal for sealing the via." Accordingly, Claim 20 is patentable over the cited references.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the present invention is in condition for allowance and early passage to issue is therefore deemed proper and respectfully requested.

It is believed that no additional fee is due. However, if any additional fee is due, it should be charged to Deposit Account No. 23-0510.

Respectfully submitted,



Kenneth Watov, Esquire  
Registration No. 26,042  
Attorney for Applicant

Address All Correspondence to:  
Kenneth Watov, Esquire  
WATOV & KIPNES, P.C.  
P.O. Box 247  
Princeton Junction, NJ 08550  
(609) 243-0330

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